

The KJB Story – 1611 to 2011

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“That Book accounts for the supremacy of England” – Queen Victoria

www.arthermitage.org/Thomas-Jones-Barker/Queen-Victoria-Giving-the-Bible-to-an-African-Chief.html



The 1611 KJB New Testament Title Page¹

Introduction

Why this Message – on a 400 year-old Book?

A simple answer: To inform, edify and provide for possible witness opportunities

A Christian friend recently emailed me an article by Peter Hitchens² of *The Daily Mail* about The Authorized Version. This article is a comment on the 400th anniversary of the 1611 Holy Bible, for which a special trust has been set up with HRH Charles the Prince of Wales as Patron³. Hitchens says this:

“The Authorised Version tends, in fact, to use good hard, earthy English words: [2 Samuel 18:33] ‘And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!’ [That verse] doesn’t seem to me to be in any way hard for a 21st century person to understand. Indeed, you can hear and feel the woe and regret in it across the centuries, an old man weeping and alone...”

It may well be that items like this in the media will draw the attention of unsaved acquaintances to **“the scripture of truth”** Daniel 10:21 so that they can then be acquainted with **“the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation”** Ephesians 1:13.

It is also to be hoped that for Christians receiving this message that the *“good hard, earthy English words”* of the 1611 Holy Bible will **“build you up”** according to **“the word of his grace”** Acts 20:32.

Why this Story – about a 400 year-old Book?

A simple answer: Because of its effect on:

- *the nation's leaders*
- *the nation's life*
- *the nation's enemies.*

The nation's leaders, e.g. HRH Charles, the Prince of Wales⁴

This is an American Independent KJB Baptist pastor quoting *The Daily Telegraph*, Dec. 20, 1989, no. 41,832, his emphases.

*“According to the Prince of Wales...the English language “has become impoverished, sloppy, and limited, a dismal wasteland”...The Prince accused the editors of the [new bibles] of “making changes in the **Authorized Version**, just to lower the tone, and believing that the rest of us wouldn't get the point if the word of God was a bit over our heads.” The Prince went on, “the word of God is **supposed to be a bit over our heads**, elevated as God is.” Never heard it put better anywhere. It will never be said to anybody over here any better...This is the King with the King's English, and “**where the word of a King is, there is power**” [Ecclesiastes 8:4a].”*

That's a remarkable effect of a 400 year-old Book on the future king, especially insofar as he appears to think the same about that Book over 20 years later.

The nation's life

Here are two statements about the effect of the 1611 Holy Bible on the nation's life.

The first is from the Roman Catholic writer F. W. Faber⁵, speaking in the mid-19th century.

“Who will not say that the uncommon beauty and marvellous English of the Protestant Bible is not one of the great strongholds of heresy [Protestant Bible belief] in this country? It lives on the ear like music that can never be forgotten, like the sound of church bells. Its felicities often seem to be things rather than words. It is part of the national mind, and the anchor of national seriousness.”

The second is from the noted historian, Dr David Starkey from his series *Monarchy* and the episode on King James 1st.

“The King James Version of the Bible, more than any other book, formed the English language and shaped the English mind.”

According to these men, the 1611 Holy Bible principally “*shaped the English mind*” and was “*part of the national mind.*” That is a significant effect of a 400 year-old Book during those 4 centuries on the nation's life.

The nation's enemies

Charles Chiniquy was a 19th century French-Canadian Catholic priest. He was a Catholic for 50 years and a priest for 25 of those years. After he got saved, Chiniquy⁶ issued this solemn warning.

“It is a fact that to-day, almost all over the world, the Church of Rome grants permission to read the Bible...But I will here ask the Roman Catholics, “To whom do you owe that privilege and honour of a Bible in your house? Is it to your Church?” Oh! no, for if your Church could be free to fulfil her own laws you would be sent to gaol; nay you would be burnt on a scaffold for that Bible. But you owe that privilege to the glorious British Protestant flag which protects you – wherever it floats on the breeze, no Pope, no priest will dare to trouble you for that Bible – they let you possess and read that holy book because they cannot help it.”

Chiniquy's statement indicates that *“the glorious British Protestant flag”* enabled even Catholics to read what many at the time perceived as the glorious British Protestant Bible. That's quite an effect of a now 400 year-old Book on the nation's enemies.

We continue with an outline of how that glorious British Protestant Bible came into being. None can introduce better the overall incentive for the work than *the learned men*, the King James translators themselves, according to the preface to the 1611 Holy Bible, entitled *The Translators To The Reader*⁷ as the following extract shows:



King, Bishops and Puritans at Hampton Court, January 1604⁸

The Learned Men

“Truly (good Christian Reader) we never thought from the beginning, that we should need to make a new Translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one...but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principal good one, not justly to be excepted against; that hath been our endeavor, that our mark” – Dr Miles Smith, *The Translators To The Reader*

How did the learned men achieve their mark, who were they and how well fitted were they for their task?

First, we must know what happened at Hampton Court in January 1604.

The Hampton Harrier - The King that played the Puritan

The Puritans⁹ were Church of England clergymen who held strongly to the English Protestant Reformation of the 16th century. The English Reformation followed the break with Rome by Henry VIII¹⁰. After the break, the Church in England gradually became the Church of England.

The Puritans wanted all traces of Catholicism removed from the English Church so when King James 1st came to the throne in 1603, the Puritans presented him with the so-called Millenary Petition¹¹, because it had 1,000 signatures, although one source says that only 750 were actually collected¹².

The king convened a conference at Hampton Court in January 1604 for the church leaders to hear the Puritans’ grievances. One of these grievances was the perceived need for a new bible.

The Puritans’ leader was Dr John Rainolds, president of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. Rainolds said to the king *“May your Majesty be pleased to direct that the Bible be now translated, such versions as are extant not answering to the original.”*

We will see later why Rainolds used the term *“the original.”*

The king replied *“I could never yet see a Bible well translated in English, but I think that of Geneva is the worst.”*

The Geneva Bible had been translated in Geneva, Switzerland in 1560 with the help of English Puritan exiles. The historian Gustavus Paine explains that it was not the text of the Geneva Bible that James objected to. Paine states:

“Some of the marginal notes in the Geneva version...disturbed him: they seemed to scoff at kings. If the Bible threatened him, it must be changed. Away with all marginal notes! And indeed...many [were] based on dogma now outworn. James may have had some right on his side; he was far from witless.”

John Rainolds stood his ground and the petition for the new bible was granted.

Paine states *“So clever was [James’s] handling of the meeting that, although he...actually threatened to harry [the Puritans] out of the land, he appeared to some observers to lean towards them. Indeed, the dean of the chapel said that on that day the king played the Puritan...after all the talk ended, it seemed [the Puritans] had...only one gain: the new Bible [but William] Tyndale’s prayer was now answered in full: James I had ordered what Tyndale died to do.”*

William Tyndale was a brilliant Bible translator whom Catholics had burnt at the stake in 1536 for his work on the scriptures. Just before he died Tyndale had prayed *“Lord, open the King of England’s eyes.”* Through James 1st and John Rainolds, God had answered His martyr’s prayer.

With James having granted the Puritans’ petition, the next step was to choose the translators. The ones eventually chosen could be summed up as:

High Church, Low Church - White male C of E Protestants

Two of James 1st’s most trusted advisers were Richard Bancroft¹³, Bishop of London and later Archbishop of Canterbury and Robert Cecil¹⁴, who became the Earl of Salisbury.

The king charged them with appointing the men to compile the new bible and by the end of summer 1604 they had selected a total of 47 scholars for the work.

As indicated, these 47 scholars were both high and low churchmen¹⁵.

The high churchmen favored a fixed and formal style of worship service and believed firmly in the overall authority of the bishop or most high-ranking clergyman of a particular area, or diocese.

The low churchmen were less formal with respect to worship services and less willing to accept the absolute authority of a diocesan bishop. The low churchmen included the Puritans like John Rainolds. They made up almost a quarter¹⁶ of the scholars. Gustavus Paine states:

“There were among [the translators] no Roman Catholics, Jews or women. They were male Protestants, roughly or smoothly within the Church of England,

and as such they thought in certain grooves. The marvel is that they did so well...

“But...for the new Bible the strife between [high and low] factions would be healthy. The Bible has always thrived on turmoil.”

It can safely be said that in reality, God had chosen the right men, at the right time, as we see from their unparalleled scholarship.

“Hebrew at his fingers’ ends” - Unparalleled Scholars

19th century historian Alexander McClure wrote this, his emphases:

*“As to the capability of those men, we may say again, that, by the good providence of God, their work was undertaken **in a fortunate time**. Not only had the English language...then ripened to its full perfection, but the study of Greek, and of the oriental tongues [including Hebrew], and of rabbinical [Jewish] lore, had then been carried to a greater extent in England than ever before or since. This particular field of learning has never been so highly cultivated among English divines [scholars] as it was at that day...All the colleges of Great Britain and America, even in this proud day of boastings, could not bring together the same number of divines equally qualified by learning and piety for the great undertaking.”*

The situation has not changed in 150 years. Dr Donald Waite is the Director of *The Bible For Today* organization in the USA. In 1992, he had been a teacher of Greek, Hebrew, Bible Speech and English for over 35 years, including teaching at seminary level.

Dr Waite¹⁷ wrote extensively on the scholarship of the King James translators. He then stated categorically that he knew enough about the Hebrew and Greek languages to know that he could not have qualified to be one of the King James translators.

Dr Waite said that in 1992 and he still holds to that statement.

So who did qualify?¹⁸ Here are some of King’s men.

Dr John Rainolds

The man who petitioned the king was appointed the Regius or Royal Professor of Divinity at Oxford in 1585. Rainolds was noted as a distinguished Greek and Hebrew scholar and it was said that *“his memory and reading were near to a miracle.”*

John Rainolds died in 1607 at the age of 58. By then, he was President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He was succeeded by Dr John Spencer, then aged 48, who was another of the translators.

Dr John Spencer

Dr Spencer was elected Greek lecturer at Corpus Christi College *at the age of 19*, which speaks volumes for his scholarly ability. His wife, it should be noted, was a great-niece of Thomas Cranmer¹⁹, former Archbishop of Canterbury, whom the Catholic Queen Mary Tudor burnt at the stake in 1556 for his Protestant testimony.

Many of the King James translators were, in fact, children or youths during the reign of Catholic Mary, aka 'Bloody' Mary. Dr Gail Riplinger writes:

“The KJV translators were born and lived their adult lives with a frightfully close view of the persecuting shadow of bloody Queen Mary 1...as small children, [they] could have seen their friends’ parents go to the stake. Children were sometimes forced to watch their own parents burn or to set them on fire themselves.”

Scenes such as those must have made a terrible impression on the young boys’ minds. That is one reason why the King James translation is in no way Papist, in spite of later criticisms to the contrary.

Dr Miles Smith

Dr Smith was appointed Bishop of Gloucester in 1612. He wrote the preface to the 1611 Holy Bible entitled *The Translators To The Reader*. It was said of Dr Smith that *“He had Hebrew at his fingers’ ends; and he was so conversant with Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic, [Oriental languages related to the Old Testament] that he made them as familiar to him as his native tongue.”*

Dr John Bois

Dr Bois was a Fellow of St. John’s College, Cambridge, to which he was admitted *at the age of 14*. He was able to read Hebrew *at the age of 5*. He was also a distinguished Greek scholar and sometimes devoted himself to his studies in the university library from 4 o’clock in the morning to 8 o’clock at night.

Such was John Bois’s reverence for the word of God that he would *stand* while studying, reading or translating the scriptures.

Dr Lancelot Andrewes

Dr Andrewes was Bishop of Winchester and Chaplain to Queen Elizabeth 1st. Elizabeth was *“that bright Occidental Star”* as *The Epistle Dedicatory* in the front of the Authorized Version describes her. It was said of Dr Andrewes that *“His knowledge in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac and Arabic...was so advanced that he may be ranked as one of the rarest linguists in Christendom.”*

Dr Richard Kilbye

Dr Kilbye became Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford in 1610. He was an excellent Greek and Hebrew scholar. After the 1611 Bible was published, he heard a young preacher give three reasons why a particular word in the 1611 Bible should have been translated differently. Dr Kilbye afterwards explained to the young preacher how he and others had considered all three reasons “*and found thirteen more considerable reasons why it was translated as now printed.*”

Such were some of the learned men. Briefly, what did they have to work with and how did they carry out their task?

Materials and Methods

The materials the King James translators had to work with included²⁰ all preceding English and foreign language Bibles. Among these sources were the Bishops’ Bible, translated during the reign of Queen Elizabeth 1st and the Puritans’ Geneva Bible.

The translators also had the Jesuit New Testament in English produced at Rheims in France in 1582.

In addition, they had all the printed Greek texts of the time, numbering 15, 6 Hebrew Old Testaments and “*a great mass*” of Greek manuscripts.

They also had the texts of ancient Bibles such as the Old Latin²¹ that dated from the 2nd Century A.D., or very close to the time when the New Testament was written. These were the Waldensian Bibles of the Vaudois, the people of the valleys in Northern Italy. The King’s men had 6 of their Bibles.

That was why John Rainolds could refer to the original text of the scriptures at Hampton Court. He and his colleagues had texts that were first written at almost the same time as the original writings.

In addition, the King James translators had the 4th century Latin Vulgate Bible of Jerome, the official bible of the Catholic Church.

They also obtained selected readings from two fairly early Greek manuscripts²² called Codex or Book A, of the 5th century and Codex B, of the 4th century. Codex A was at the time located in Alexandria, Egypt and Codex B is the well-known Vaticanus manuscript located in the Vatican Library. Codex B and another 4th century codex named Aleph, after the first letter of the Hebrew Alphabet, form the main Greek basis for the Latin Vulgate²³.

With the Jesuit Rheims New Testament, the Latin Vulgate and readings from Codex A and Codex B, the King’s men therefore had access to virtually all the variations from the 1611 Holy Bible that are now found in the new versions.

As American researcher Norman Ward has said, *“The translators of 1611 had substantially the same selection of readings from which to choose as did the revisers of 1881 [RV], 1952 [RSV], 1973 [NIV] and 1979 [NKJV].”*

Concerning the methods by which the King James translators worked, Bishop Bancroft, with the help of Lancelot Andrewes and others, set down 15 rules for the work²⁴. Dr Benjamin Wilkinson²⁵ gives an overview of how the King’s men put these rules into practice:

“The forty-seven learned men...were divided first into three companies: one worked at Cambridge, another at Oxford, and the third at Westminster. Each of these companies again split up into two. Thus, there were six companies working on six allotted portions of the Hebrew and Greek Bibles. Each member of each company worked individually on his task, then brought to each member of his committee the work he had accomplished. The committee all together went over that portion of the work translated.

“Thus, when one company had come together, and had agreed on what should stand, after having compared their work, as soon as they had completed any one of the sacred books, they sent it to each of the other companies to be critically reviewed. If a later company, upon reviewing the book, found anything doubtful or unsatisfactory, they noted such places, with their reasons, and sent it back to the company whence it came. If there should be a disagreement, the matter was finally arranged at a general meeting of the chief persons of all the companies at the end of the work.

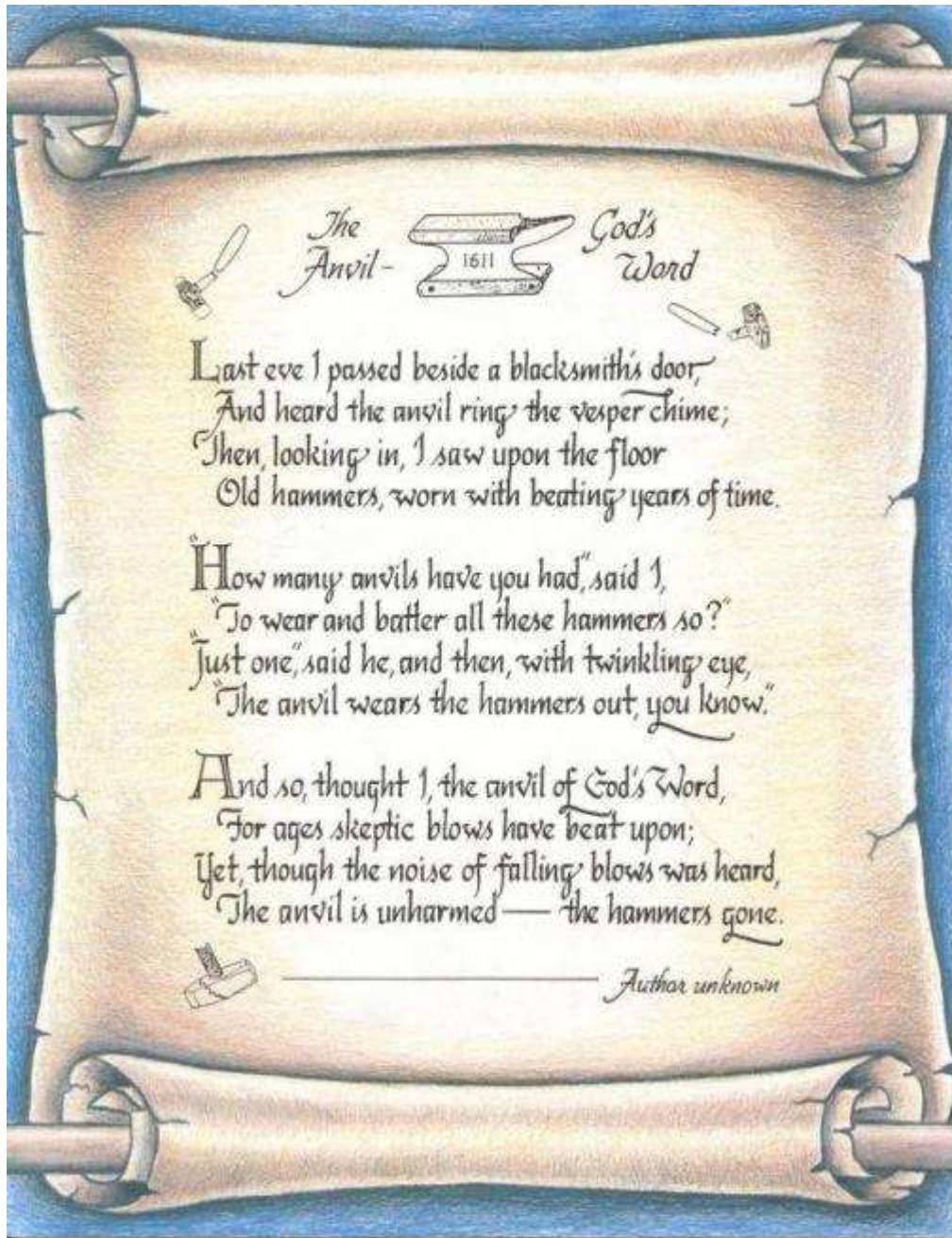
“It can be seen by this method that each part of the work was carefully gone over at least fourteen times. It was further understood that if there was any special difficulty or obscurity, all the learned men of the land could be called upon by letter for their judgment. And finally each bishop kept the clergy of his diocese notified concerning the progress of the work, so that if any one felt constrained to send any particular observations, he was notified to do so.”

Dr Donald Waite²⁶ has said that the translators’ method had never been used before in Bible translation and has never been used since.

He concludes that this method is certainly superior to any other.

We move now briefly to consider the welter of criticisms that have been leveled at the 1611 Holy Bible.

The Critics' Den



The Anvil of God's Word

The 1611 Holy Bible has received an avalanche of criticism in the last 400 years from a legion of critics, "***My name is legion: for we are many***" Mark 5:9.

That Book and its critics are well described in a poem entitled:

The Anvil Of God's Word²⁷

*Last eve I passed beside a blacksmith's door
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;
When looking in, I saw upon the floor,
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.*

*"How many anvils have you had," said I,
"To wear and batter these hammers so?"
"Just one," said he; then with a twinkling eye,
"The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."*

*And so, I thought, the anvil of God's Word,
For ages, sceptics' blows have beat upon;
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The anvil is unharmed - the hammers gone.*

We now address our final question, what happened to the 1611 Holy Bible after 1611 and on to the present?



The Book That Changed The World²⁸

The Word of a King, Ecclesiastes 8:4

Not Formalized but Authorized

The question arises, was the Authorized Version ever officially authorized?

Dr Laurence Vance²⁹ notes that Dr Miles Smith states in *The Translators To The Reader* that King James 1st “gave order for this Translation” that became the 1611 Holy Bible. Dr Vance concludes, rightly that the 1611 Holy Bible is indeed authorized because according to Ecclesiastes 8:4, “***Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?***”

It is interesting that the 1611 Authorized Bible was the last English Bible to be translated under the direct authority of a king. The committee that produced the Revised Version of 1881 appealed twice to the Crown³⁰ in order to get royal approval for their new version, as for the 1611 Bible.

Queen Victoria refused each time.

Dr Vance highlights another reason why the 1611 Holy Bible became Authorized and that is, its universal acceptance by the English-speaking peoples across the world. This was the real reason for the Book’s authorization after its publication in 1611. Gustavus Paine agrees. He states³¹:

“The Puritans fought their way forward. The 1611 Bible by its own worth was making itself welcome throughout the country, for those on both sides needed the best modern texts with which to fight their doctrinal skirmishes. High churchmen in greater numbers began to use the 1611 version, which in centuries to come would be the sole bond uniting the countless English-speaking Protestant sects.

“In 1629 the Bible was again revised, but only in small ways, and once more in minor respects in 1638. The last issue of the Geneva Bible was in 1644. By then the King James Version was ahead of all others, and now the strife over forms and doctrine helped it on.”

As Paine also said, *“The Bible has always thrived on turmoil.”*

Alexander McClure states that *“It (the AV1611) speedily came into general use as the standard version, by the common consent of the English people; and required no act of parliament nor royal proclamation to establish its authority. Some of the older versions continued to be reprinted for forty years; but no long time elapsed ere the common version quietly and exclusively occupied the field.”*

It is further interesting to look at the comments of men who were both for and against the 1611 Holy Bible³².

“Give me that Book” - Bunyan, Wesley, Spurgeon, Ryle, Shaw

This is from *John Bunyan, The Immortal Dreamer*, by W. Burgess McCreary: *“A university man met Bunyan on the road near Cambridge. Said he to Bunyan, “How dare you preach, not having the original Scriptures?” “Do you have them - the copies written by the apostles and prophets?” asked Bunyan. “No,” replied the scholar. “But I have what I believe to be a true copy of the original.” “And I,” said Bunyan, “believe the English Bible to be a true copy too.””*

John Charles Ryle³³ was the first Church of England Bishop of Liverpool. In the 1870s, he wrote a book entitled *The Christian Leaders of the Last (i.e. 18th) Century*, about the great revival preachers like Whitefield and Wesley. He said this about these preachers and the 1611 Holy Bible, his emphases.

*“The spiritual reformers of the last century taught constantly **the sufficiency and supremacy of Holy Scripture**. The Bible, whole and un mutilated, was their sole rule of faith and practice. They accepted all its statements without question or dispute. They knew nothing of any part of Scripture being uninspired. They never allowed that man has any “verifying faculty” within him, by which Scripture statements may be weighed, rejected or received. They never flinched from asserting that there can be no error in the Word of God; and that when we cannot understand or reconcile some part of its contents, the fault is in the interpreter and not in the text. In all their preaching they were eminently men*

of one book. To that book they were content to pin their faith, and by it to stand or fall. This was one grand characteristic of their preaching. They honoured, they loved, they revered the Bible.”

One of those men was John Wesley. He said this about the 1611 Holy Bible.

““I want to know one thing – the way to heaven – how to land safe on that happy shore. God Himself has condescended to teach the way; for this very end He came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book. Oh, give me that book! At any price give me the book of God! I have it: here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be a man of one book.””

Consider what Charles Haddon Spurgeon had to say about the 1611 Holy Bible.

“The Bible is God’s word, and when I see it, I seem to hear a voice saying, ‘I am the Book of God, man, read me; I am God’s writing: open my leaves, for I was penned by God’...I plead with you, I beg of you, respect your Bibles, and search them out. Go home and read your Bibles...O Book of books! And wast thou written by my God? Then I will bow before thee, thou Book of vast authority! For He has written this Book Himself...let us love it, let us count it more precious than fine gold!”

In the English-speaking world, even up until World War 2, the attitudes toward the 1611 Holy Bible expressed by those men; Bunyan, Wesley, Ryle and Spurgeon, were not as exceptional as we might think, as this statement shows:

“In all these instances the Bible means the translation authorised by King James the First...to this day the common human Britisher or citizen of the United States of North America accepts and worships it as a single book by a single author, the book being the Book of Books and the author being God.”

What a bibliolatrous thing to say about the Britain and the United States of a mere 60 to 70 years ago! Who could possibly make such an outrageous statement?

Answer: George Bernard Shaw, who was a lifelong atheist³⁴.

However, Shaw was of course an accomplished and well-known writer, so he was in a position to know what Britons and Americans of his time thought about literature.

We’ll now look briefly again at how closely the 1611 Holy Bible is part of our national life and how you can’t get away from that Book, no matter what you do.

“God save the king!” - The national anthem

The expression *“God save the king!”* is of course part of England’s national anthem and well-known as such. However, that expression comes straight from a 1611 Authorized King James Holy Bible. The words occur 5 times. They are found in 1 Samuel 10:24, 2 Samuel 16:16 twice, 2 Kings 11:12, 2 Chronicles 23:11 and they have stood there undimmed and unblemished for 400 years. They will stand there forever.

That reading illustrates something about the 1611 English Bible for English-speaking folk who believe the Book. The Author of the Book said in Hebrews 13:5, *“I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”*

And the Book is like its Author.

As well as being part of our national life, the Book would become part of *“the life of the world”* John 6:51, as we will now see.

Gone into all the world

English time, English longitude, English empire, English text

Remember what the ex-priest of Rome, Charles Chiniquy said about *“the glorious British Protestant flag [that] floats on the breeze.”* By the 19th century, that flag floated on the breeze the world over and with it went the British Protestant Bible. Dr Peter S. Ruckman of Pensacola Bible Institute has summed up what happened in history³⁵, his emphases.

“To fulfill Acts 1:8 [for the Lord’s witnesses to go to “the uttermost part of the earth”]...All the Lord needed was a Bible in line with what He had already written and preserved; since He had already decreed (in 1000 BC) that there had to be present “the word of a King” Ecclesiastes 8:4 before there could be any spiritual “power” in that word (Romans 13:1-4), and since His king was a JEW (John 18:34)...God needed a king with a Jewish name; He got one...this time it was JAMES. James is the English word for JACOB”...

“After 1588, “Britannica ruled the waves,” and...with absolute time determined by England (Greenwich Observatory), with absolute location on the earth’s surface located from Greenwich, England (longitude)...by 1850 the sun “never set on the British Empire.””

Britain was a seafaring nation and wherever Britain’s seafarers went, British missionaries went with the 1611 Holy Bible and to *“the regions beyond”* 2 Corinthians 10:16, as Dr Ruckman explains, his emphases.

“The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries sport the greatest host of Bible-believing witnesses the world has ever seen...These battle-scarred storm troopers crossed mountains, prairies, deserts, lands and seas and cast themselves into martyrs’ graves...They counted their life-styles in terms of the chains they loosed, the souls they liberated, the hungry they fed, and the

*heathen they transformed. They lived and felt Jesus Christ in every fiber of their being... They believed one Book and they preached and memorized **that Book**, taught **that Book**, and lived and died by **that Book**...*”

So with the English Protestant Bible spreading throughout the British Empire and therefore the world, it is no wonder that today, the DVD that has been released in observance of the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible has a simple but compelling title.

The Book That Changed The World – on DVD



The Book That Changed The World – on DVD

King James 1st of England³⁶

You can get it from Amazon:

www.amazon.co.uk/KJB-Book-That-Changed-World/dp/B004BLTAT6

The Product Description states that *“The greatest translation of Holy Scripture emerged into a world and culture that would never be quite the same again.”*

Queen Victoria, who reigned over the British Empire for more than 60 years understood that statement. She was the queen that challenged the world.

The Queen that Challenged the World – a magnificent painting

Queen Victoria³⁷ actually said on one occasion, to an African chieftain to whom she presented a copy of the 1611 Holy Bible:

“That Book accounts for the supremacy of England.”

The vivid painting by Thomas Armitage commemorates the occasion³⁸.



“That Book accounts for the supremacy of England” – Queen Victoria

However, it was not for the purpose of empire that God made England supreme and Britain Great. God made Britain great so that *“all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God”* according to Isaiah 52:10.

We close with a compelling illustration of how this worked out in the days of the British Empire, from the lives of some of those *“battle-scarred storm troopers”* that Dr Ruckman described.

Dr William Grady³⁹ relates how Charles Darwin visited the islands of Tierra del Fuego at the southern end of South America in 1833. The natives were so savage that Darwin was convinced that he had found his so-called ‘missing link’ between animals and humans.

In about 1870, Darwin visited Tierra del Fuego again.

This time, he was astounded to discover that many natives had become Christians through the work of the South American Missionary Society, or SAMS⁴⁰.

The society was founded in 1844 by Captain Allen Gardiner of the Royal Navy. Gardiner and six of his missionary companions died in the society's service in 1851 in Patagonia. They had endured several months of sickness, starvation and extreme cold, reaching 20 degrees below zero.

Captain Gardiner wrote the last lines in his diary on September 6th 1851⁴¹. He said this: *“By God’s Grace this blessed group was able to sing praises to Christ for eternity. I am not hungry or thirsty in spite of 5 days without eating; Wonderful Grace and Love to me, a sinner...”*

As Paul said in Philippians 4:4 **“Rejoice in the Lord always [all the way]: and again I say, Rejoice.”** Captain Gardiner and his companions set the standard for that verse.



Captain Gardiner died near the upturned boat in September 1851

Thanks to his 1870 visit to Tierra del Fuego, Charles Darwin was so impressed by the work of SAMS that he became an Honorary Member and gave an annual subscription to the society for the rest of his life.

It needs only to be added that the missionary workers of SAMS ministered to the tribes of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego through one Book, the Book that John Wesley and Charles Haddon Spurgeon called *“the Book of God.”*

That Book didn't stop at the ends of the earth.

Apollo 8⁴² was the first manned spacecraft to leave earth's orbit. That was in 1968 and on Christmas Eve, the crew of Apollo 8 read from Genesis 1:1-13 in a 1611 Authorized King James Holy Bible.

Conclusion

400 years on, we find that the Book that had its precarious beginnings at Hampton Court in 1604 went from there to the imperial throne of Queen Victoria, to ***“the regions beyond”*** 2 Corinthians 10:16 in darkest Africa, ***“unto the uttermost part of the earth”*** Acts 1:8, literally, to Tierra del Fuego at the southernmost end of South America and even into outer space, with the Apollo 8 mission.

400 years on, the Book is still going strong, with well over a billion copies sold⁴³, evidently the only Book to achieve that distinction⁴⁴.

That Book changed the world for the better. The testimony of the last 400 years is that it can change you for the better according to 1 Peter 2:2.

“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:”

The last word should go to Dr Miles Smith, from *The Translators To The Reader*.

“Ye are brought unto fountains of living water which ye digged not; do not cast earth into them with the Philistines [Genesis 26:15], neither prefer broken pits before them with the wicked Jews [Jeremiah 2:13]. Others have laboured, and you may enter into their labours; O receive not so great things in vain, O despise not so great salvation!...a blessed thing it is, and will bring us to everlasting blessedness in the end, when God speaketh unto us, to hearken; when he setteth his word before us, to read it; when he stretcheth out his hand and calleth, to answer, Here am I, here we are to do thy will, O God. The Lord work a care and conscience in us to know him and serve him, that we may be acknowledged of him at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with the holy Ghost, be all praise and thanksgiving. Amen.”



Earthrise - from Apollo 8, ***“And God made the firmament”*** Genesis 1:7

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